



Kim Coble
Executive Director

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2024 Board of
Directors

Support HB 91 - Fossil Fuel-Powered Lawn and Garden Care Equipment - State Purchase, Use, and Contracts - Prohibition

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Dear Mme. Chairwoman and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV supports HB 91 - Fossil Fuel-Powered Lawn and Garden Care Equipment - State Purchase, Use, and Contracts - Prohibition, and we thank Del. Foley for her leadership on this issue.

On December 28, 2023, The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) issued [Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan](#), laying out our state framework to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions 60% by 2031, and to be net zero by 2045. The main message of this report is that it will take an "all of society approach" for Maryland to meet its climate goals. HB 91 is part of such an approach.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, lawn and garden equipment such as lawn mowers, leaf blowers and weed trimmers emit more than 30 million tons of carbon dioxide in the U.S. annually, the equivalent of the entire city of Los Angeles.

In addition, a recent report entitled [Lawn Care Goes Electric](#) from Maryland PIRG found that lawn and garden equipment annually emit 22,000 tons of fine particulate matter in the U.S., along with 68,000 tons of nitrogen oxides (a principal component in the creation of smog), 350,000 tons of volatile organic compounds and chemicals such as benzene and formaldehyde. The net effect of these toxic chemicals in the air that we breathe are increased rates of asthma and other respiratory diseases, cancer, mental health issues, and even premature death.

Finally, the effects of these emissions, including public health effects, are disproportionately borne by landscape workers, primarily people of color. The Seattle Times [reports](#) that 46% of all landscaping workers nationwide identify as Hispanic or Latino, though U.S. Census data shows that they only represent 19% of the population.

California has implemented an [incentive program](#), to assist with the upfront cost of capital landscaping equipment upgrades that may pose a challenge for small business owners in the state. Such a program could help to cover the incremental cost of this transition. We hope that this or a similar program will be given consideration in Maryland, to ensure that small and minority owned businesses can continue to thrive in this sector.

HB 91 begins the process of reducing Maryland's emissions from this class of commercial equipment, with positive climate, equity and public health impacts for our state. **Maryland LCV urges a favorable report on this important bill.**